2120 Health News

A newsletter brought to you by...

Zepp Wellness, Ziegler Integrative Health, Daziran Integrative Health and Head to Heal Centre for Naturopathic Medicine

Collaborative efforts

By Dr Julie Zepp Rutledge ND

Four heads are better than one! My newsletter attempts have evolved over the past seven years starting with a couple of months worth of solo newsletters back in 2005. This was early in my practice days at Regina Rehab and lasted a few months until convincing the wonderful and knowledgeable practitioners there to join with me and share their knowledge from their various areas of expertise in article form for my newsletters. In moving to 2120 College Avenue in November of 2009, my newsletters became an individual effort for a couple of years until now!

Now, we the Naturopathic health team at 2120 College Avenue—now called ***The Wellness Centre***—are proud to bring you our first edition of our collaborative newsletter. In the spirit of change we are calling this newsletter ***2120 Health News*** and articles will be contributed by our four Naturopathic Doctors: our newest recruit: Dr Allison Ziegler ND; celebrating her one-year anniversary in Regina at our clinic this month: Dr Marika Geis ND; the ever-enthusiastic Dr Jonathan Bablad ND and myself, Dr Julie Zepp Rutledge ND.

We sincerely hope that you will find our articles interesting, informative and inspiring! We will continue to have our beloved and sweet Hayley Stobbs RHN contribute the quarterly healthy recipes and encourage you to consult with her if you require assistance in implementing the wheat, dairy and sugar-free diet your friendly Wellness Centre Naturopathic Doctor might prescribe for you (wink!).

For further information on our respective practitioners, please visit our group website at www.collegewellness.ca where you will find links to our individual websites. Best to you all in health for 2012! ♥

Sign up to receive our newsletter via email:

- Send an email to info@collegewellness.ca or visit www.drzepp.com and click "Subscribe"

Winter 2011

Volume 2, Issue 4

Inside this issue:

The Brain on Meditation

By Dr Julie Zepp Rutledge ND

It seems that at least every other newsletter I refer to the concepts of detachment and mindful awareness, as I do believe them to be essential components of our health and well-being. Not only do they help establish an inner state of calm, but this translates to less muscle tension, fewer headaches, better blood pressure and the cultivation of healthier habits as we are more present in choosing our foods, activities and interactions (among countless other benefits).

The goal of this article is to offer you information on the emerging science behind what is actually occurring in the brain as we teach and train ourselves to move into these states of neutrality, equanimity and detached awareness.

Some background on the brain will help you best understand how it works and how meditation affects its functioning. To keep it simple, the brain can be thought of as 3 separate areas: the hind-brain, the mid-brain and the fore-brain. The hind-brain (cerebellum, medulla and pons) is the most primitive part of the brain located just above the spinal cord and governs functions essential to our basic needs—such as breathing, swallowing and balance. The mid-brain is in the middle part of the brain and is slightly more advanced and is responsible for our survival response. It contains critical structures such as the areas of the brain needed for vision, hearing, motor control and sleep/wake in addition to the very important structures that make up the limbic system and govern our arousal. This is a very important concept when it comes to states such as anxiety, anger, stress, etc. The forebrain, also known as the cerebral cortex is the most advanced part and evolutionarily most recent part of the human brain. Also called "the grey matter" the forebrain allows us to think critically, to self-reflect, to reason and to activate our rational, non-emotive, minds.

All too often in our stress-filled society we activate the midbrain over the forebrain thus leading to a heightened state of arousal or stress response. Alternatively we allow our very brilliant forebrain to send thoughts to our midbrain that alone are not harmful but when coupled with the stress response that the midbrain imposes on these thoughts a state of arousal is activated.

A "state of arousal" or "stress response" refers to the state activated when the body perceives a trigger—be it a thought, an event, a person, etc—as a threat. This activates the limbic portion of the midbrain and sends a message to the adrenal glands of the body to move into a "fight or flight" state. Here the blood pressure will increase, breathing becomes shallow and rapid, skeletal muscles (jaw, neck, arms, legs) tense, blood supply to the digestive system drops off, the relaxation response is inhibited making it hard to settle down. Often times these subtle body messages are missed, as they are largely beyond our conscious control, until we realize we aren't taking deep full breaths or our muscles are tight and aching. Other times we feel in an acute state of anxiety, panic, breathlessness or worry. Regardless of what we are noticing, this response is affecting our body's functioning. Activated too often and this can lead to conditions such as chronic fatigue, depression, anxiety, insomnia, IBS, immune system dysregulation (asthma, allergies, auto-immune conditions), attention and memory problems.

Find your Zen place—for many of us it is outside, in nature, connected to the Earth, and the Sky.

Wherever yours is, find it and go there frequently—daily if possible, at least weekly—no less to get rebalanced.

Wascana Pool—nestled in the trees in the middle of Wascana Park—my own sanctuary for a moving meditation during our wonderful sunny summers!

Recent research done through Harvard's Mind Body Medicine Institute and Psychiatric Departments use Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to view the brains of meditators and non-meditators. What is shown in the brains is a much more active cerebral cortex, especially the area called the prefrontal cortex (PFC). This translates to better planning and decision-making. It keeps us "out of trouble" by facilitating appropriate behaviors such as keeping our anger or emotions in check (note that it is healthy to express and not repress our anger or other emotions, however we also need the discriminatory ability to be able to not allow our actions to be governed or dictated by our emotions), preventing us from addictive behaviors such as overeating, drinking, gambling or smoking. It allows us to link memory with sensory input so we can connect what we have learned in the past with what is happening in the present moment—basically helps us learn from our mistakes and not keep repeating them!

(Continued on page 3)

The Brain on Meditation Continued

Enhanced activation of these "gray matter" areas of the brain allows us to have an increased ability to shift perspective—important for adaptability and flexibility—traits important and that allow us to roll with the many punches life throws our way. Improvement in cortex functioning allows us to shift from automatic-pilot reactivity and the emotional upheavals that result from reactivity and into a place of awareness and witnessing.

This is in contrast to the low density of grey matter in individuals whose mid-brain amygdala (part of the limbic system) dominates and are governed by emotional reactivity, fear and stress.

Generally, as we age, the cortex *atrophies* (shrivels up!) however in long-term meditators this area of the brain remains thick and active into the elderly years.

Many people I see in practice suffer from problems related to "adrenal fatigue" - a condition of burn-out that results in fatigue, lack of motivation, weight gain, skin problems, difficulty concentrating, memory loss, asthma/ allergies, etc.—and one of the biggest solutions I have found to this problem, in addition to direct support of the adrenal glands, is to work on the parts of the brain that govern adrenal gland over-stimulation. This involves teaching a patient how to avoid the stimulation of and to quiet the activation of the limbic system and how to move more fully into the prefrontal cortex.

One of my favorite and very simple and effective techniques for activation of the cortex over the limbic system is through the delicate use of language. Have you ever noticed that certain words trigger a stress response in you? Often times this goes unnoticed however physiological studies show that the language we use dictates our bodies' response. For instance the use of the words: *should, have to, need to, must* have a direct result in limbic system and adrenal gland activation. These words infer pressure and expectation and trigger a highly energy-consuming stress response. In contrast the words *could, would like to,* and *want to* activate the cerebral cortex which allows us to spring into action without the feelings of stress in our bodies. Try shifting your vocabulary to these more healthful phrases and see what you notice.

A formal meditation practice is definitely suggested for helping to make the neurological pathway changes to allow us to live more fully in our cortical brain rather than our stress brain. The more often we can practice and train this state, the more this becomes our default way of thinking. Consider taking a meditation class or meditation -focused yoga class or even picking up some beginner meditation CDs. The Sounds True website (www.soundstrue.com) offers some great information on meditation and has free meditation downloads.

Ideally, then, the goal is to move your practice "off the mat" and into the world so that whether we're checking email, washing dishes or reading to our children, we are practicing mindful awareness.

Through the discipline of practice we can change our brains and become healthier inside and out! ♥

Mutlivitamins for KIDS

By Dr Jonathan Bablad ND

I often am asked for product recommendations for maintenance and prevention of nutritional deficiencies in children. Being a proud papa to a rambunctious five year old and seeing a large number of pediatrics in my naturopathic practice, I am always searching for products that impress me for their absorbability and ease to administer to children.

What I also look for in a brand is that the product contain very clean high-quality ingredients and all the better if they are available in liquid format, making it very easy to administer to infants and children.

Multivitamins can be a good idea for children especially if there is not a lot of variety in their diet. Iron is a crucial nutrient for a child's physical development but if they are picky eaters, iron-rich foods can be low down on their list of "wants." A liquid multivitamin that mixes well with an ounce of fruit juice, can make compliance easy, even amongst the pickiest of little eaters.

The best is of course trying to get a variety of whole foods into your little ones but if you are looking for nutritional support I'd be happy to give you a few specific recommendations.

You can contact me Dr. Jonathan Bablad at:

dr. bablad@headtoheal.net ♥

Beverage Wars

By Dr Marika Geis ND

Beverage wars. With the multitudes of choices out there, sodas, 'vitamin water', sugar-laden antioxidant juices, white teas promoting 'anti -aging' benefits, it's a safe bet that water remains the healthiest choice. However, when it comes to water, consumers often are faced with mixed messages. You're making a healthier choice sure, but at what expense? Each time we dispose of a plastic bottle, we are told that it remains in a landfill for a minimum of 700 years before it begins to decompose. Coupled with the fact that 80% of bottles are not recycled, the environmental impact is significant to say the least. Space in the landfill is not the only issue. 24 million gallons of oil are needed to produce a billion plastic bottles. The average Canadian consumes approximately 167 bottles per year. So what to do? According to David Suzuki, who insists on drinking municipal water wherever he goes, drinking bottled water is an unimaginable waste not to mention a significant health hazard, and that the only way to mitigate the damage is to drink tap water. Increasingly, Canadians fear that their water is unsafe. The Environmental Working Group states that there are over 315 pollutants in municipal tap water. More than half of the chemicals detected are not subject to health or safety regulations and can legally be present in any amount. While the federal government in the United States has health guidelines for some, at least 49 of these contaminants have been found in one place or another at levels above those guidelines, polluting the tap water for 53.6 million Americans. Despite these infractions, at least the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) guidelines for maximum contaminant levels in water are standards enforced by law. In Canada, our water quality guidelines are at best, *recommendations* which *do not* necessarily have the force of law behind them; responsibility for water quality rests with the administrators of the myriad local and municipal water systems across Canada. One only need be reminded of the May 2000 Walkerton E-coli outbreak that resulted in seven deaths and 2000 illnesses, to want to take control of their water quality.

Water filters are becoming an increasingly popular way to reconcile the need for less waste with healthier and safer water. But how to choose? Just like the myriad of choices available to you when choosing a beverage, choices of water filters are equally overwhelming not to mention the confusing selection criteria. What follows is an attempt to demystify the selection process and give you a few guidelines to begin choosing which filtration system is right for you.

The first step is to choose a filter that is independently certified. At a minimum filters (available in two types: point of entry or point of use) should meet NSF 53 (National Sanitation Foundation) certification. NSF 53 is designed to reduce specific health-related contaminants, such as *Cryptosporidium*, *Giardia*, lead, volatile organic chemicals (VOCs), MTBE (methyl tertiary-butyl ether), that may be present in public or private drinking water.

The second step is to choose your filtration process. There are a variety of ways to meet or exceed the NSF 53 standard although only 4-5 options are available to the general public. **Activated carbon** filters are positively charged and highly absorbent. They reduce bad tastes and odors, including chlorine. NSF 53 activated carbon filters can substantially reduce many hazardous contaminants, including heavy metals such as copper, lead and mercury (although it should be mentioned that a solid carbon block cannot achieve this – it must be combined with a KDF, see below); disinfection by-products; parasites such as *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium* ; pesticides; radon; and volatile organic chemicals such as methyl-tert-butyl ether (MTBE), dichlorobenzene and trichloroethylene (TCE). The advantage of using activated carbon as a filter is that it retains all the positively charged minerals (what makes water 'hard' or 'alkaline') such as calcium, magnesium potassium and sodium; minerals necessary to maintain optimal health.

KDF resin filtration has limited utility in that it needs long exposure to untreated water and large amounts of the resin in order for it to exert its effects; mainly to remove chlorine. As such, KDF resin is usually applied in point of entry systems and in some cases shower heads to reduce

(Continued on page 5)

Beverage Wars Continued

(Continued from page 4)

chlorine exposure. One of the disadvantages of using KDF resin as a filter is that in some cases it can leach copper and zinc into the water as both minerals are used to reduce bacterial growth within the filter itself. KDF filters also clog fairly easily and require huge amounts of hot water to decongest the apparatus with no way to stem the flow of the dislodged pollutants into the treated water.

Distillation is an expensive process that heats the water to the vapor point and aids in removing some impurities from the water. The process itself requires electricity and adequate water, since it wastes gallons of water for every gallon produced. However the main disadvantage is that it leaves the water 'soft' or mineral free. If drunk over a long period the body tends to lend its own minerals to balance the effect on the body's pH. Bones and teeth get weak with time. Another disadvantage is that distillation is not effective at removing VOC's because many of them recondense back into liquid just like water does. For this reason, a distiller is usually combined with a carbon filter to remove additional chemicals.

Reverse osmosis was developed to remove salt from sea water for military submarines. The reverse osmosis process draws water through a membrane. Salt water is put on one side of the membrane and pressure is applied to stop, and then "reverse," the osmotic process. It generally takes a lot of pressure and is fairly slow, removing all minerals in the process (similar to distilled water). For every one gallon of water produced, 10 gallons of water is used in the RO process. It does however get rid of most contaminants such as *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia;* heavy metals: cadmium, copper, lead, mercury and other pollutants including arsenic, barium, nitrites, perchlorate and selenium.

UV Disinfection uses ultraviolet light to kill bacteria and viruses. *Class A* systems protect against harmful bacteria and viruses, including *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia*, while *Class B* systems are designed to make non-disease-causing bacteria inactive. Unfortunately, it is not effective against parasites, heavy metals and VOC's. Because of this it is often used in combination with a carbon filter and sediment screen.

Once you have decided on your filter, it's important to maintain it properly as its performance will decrease over time as contaminants build up and potentially back up into your 'treated' water. Make sure to follow the manufacturer's maintenance directions. Some filters only require a cartridge change, while others are better maintained by a certified professional. Many filter distributors offer maintenance and service contracts for their products. Before buying any water treatment system, compare not only filter prices, but also operating and maintenance costs for the different units.

Of the options available to you, the one with the widest scope is likely a filter using carbon technology. The amount of water required to produce distilled or reverse osmosis water negates some of the environmental concerns associated with filtered water. The 'softer' product would seem to work against one's good health, given the lack of minerals and would therefore not be a suitable choice. KDF filtration lacks utility in that it needs long exposure time to treated water in order to be effective. There is one application, however, that serves; 'Sprite' shower heads use KDF filtration in conjunction with their patented non-carbon 'Chloragon' technology to remove chlorine, among other things, from your shower water. Ionizing water may zap microbes that could make us sick but does little to address heavy metals, negatively charged ions (chlorine, flourine etc..) and volatile organic compounds. Carbon remains the one choice with the broadest reach. It removes all of the above in addition to disinfection compounds and parasites and has the added benefit of retaining health promoting minerals. There's a lot of variability among carbon filters however. Filters like the 'Britta' brand are great in theory but limited in their ability to handle household demand as their capacity is often overwhelmed. The need for frequent replacement drives up the price per gallon significantly. Spending some extra money on a filter proven to remove impurities is a worthwhile investment that will save you in the long run.

Still need more help choosing the right one? check out the Environmental Working Group's Guide to choosing a water filter

http://www.ewg.org/tap-water/getawaterfilter !♥

Inflammation and chronic disease

By Dr Allison Ziegler ND

Inflammation: a double-edged-sword - a process that is needed but one that can also cause disease in our body. About 1/3 of all disease is due to inflammation so understanding what inflammation is and what we can do to manage it is important for health promotion.

The simple definition of inflammation is activation of the immune system. The immune cells produce chemicals or messages that recruit more cells to the area of the body in need. This immune response is trying to protect and counteract some harmful process going on in our body.

What do we need to know about this process and how can it cause disease?

There are two types of inflammation, acute and chronic. Acute inflammation is the good kind of inflammation. It is beneficial and required for healing to occur, such as when you cut your finger.

Chronic inflammation on the other hand, is a maladaptive and inappropriate response by the body. It is characterized by continuous and simultaneous destruction and healing of tissues initiated by the immune system.

How does inflammation contribute to common diseases?

Cancer—Exposure to a cancer-causing agent causes mutation of specific cells in the body. This mutation causes the cells to grow and divide abnormally. The abnormal growth of such cells causes them to become injured and release their contents to the surrounding tissue. Included in the cell contents are proteins, which send messages or activate the immune system to send cells to the area (inflammation). The inflammation increases the growth of the cancerous cells further because the specific immune cells produce subsequent messengers that promote the growth of the tumor cells themselves. As a result, the cycle of cell growth, injury, release of immune activating proteins and inflammation persists.

Diabetes—Insulin is produced in the pancreas, which is secreted throughout the rest of the body to help cells take up sugar for energy. Therefore, when you eat more sugary foods, the higher the insulin levels must be. In diabetes Type II, the pancreas does not produce enough insulin and the body is more resistant to the insulin that is being produced. So how do these cells become insulin resistant? One link is the amount of adipose (fat) tissue present in the body. Adipose tissue produces excess inflammatory messengers. It is thought that this increase in inflammation is responsible for the cells becoming insulin resistant. Consequently, insulin resistant cells can no longer take up sugar for fuel and the amount of sugar increases in the blood stream, resulting in diabetes.

Alzheimer's Disease—Alzheimer's disease is age associated brain-degenerative disease characterized by the formation of plaques and tangles in the brain leading to impaired memory, movement, cognition, language, emotion and personality. It is a more recent discovery that the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord) contains its own immune cells. Furthermore, the immune cells located in the brain have been shown to produce their own inflammatory messengers that may lead to the development of plaques and tangles in the brain. The brain also has a protective barrier known as the blood-brain-barrier, which helps protect the fragile brain tissue from harmful substances that enter the body. However, some inflammatory cells can still cross the barrier. This means if there is a high amount of inflammation in other parts of the body, inflammatory cells can enter the brain and promote the development of plaques and tangles.

How can we manage inflammation through our diet to prevent associated diseases?

Fats—We hear a lot about "fat-free" products and diets that focus on restricting the amount of fat you consume. Although it is not good to consume high dietary fat, it is important to understand that there are healthy sources of fat, which are used by the body to produce hormones, for energy and to slow the absorption of sugar. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the type of fat we consume. Additionally, the wrong or unhealthy fats actually promote inflammation. The number one unhealthy and inflammatory fat is trans fat. They are synthetically derived fats that are noted on food labels as "hydrogenated" or "partially hydrogenated" and are commonly found in crackers and cookies. Saturated fats are solid at room temperature (butter, red meat, shortening) and should be limited because they also increase inflammation. Animal fats that promote inflammation the most are grain-fed beef and pork.

Unsaturated fats are the healthy fats and they are liquid at room temperature or solid when refrigerated (olive oil, avocados, nuts, fish, cheese, Omega 3, 6, 9). Omega-3 fats are strong anti-inflammatory agents; therefore, consuming foods rich in Omega-3 fats will help to modulate inflammation.

(Continued on page 7)

Inflammation and chronic disease Continued

(Continued from page 6)

These foods include olive oil, almond butter, nuts and seeds, avocado, yogurt, fish and flax seed. Excessive consumption of Omega-6 fats should be avoided as they cause inflammation in excess.

Other Foods that Increase Inflammation—Any foods that increase insulin will increase inflammation because insulin itself is a signaler of inflammation. These foods include sugar, sweets and processed grains. The nightshade vegetable family including potatoes, tomatoes, peppers and eggplant are also promoters of inflammation.

Foods that Decrease Inflammation—Cold-water fish (wild-caught salmon, tuna, sardines, herring, rainbow trout, mackerel) are rich in Omega-3 fats, thus decrease inflammation. Spices such as turmeric, garlic and ginger are strong anti-inflammatory foods.

Healthy Snack Ideas to Decrease Inflammation

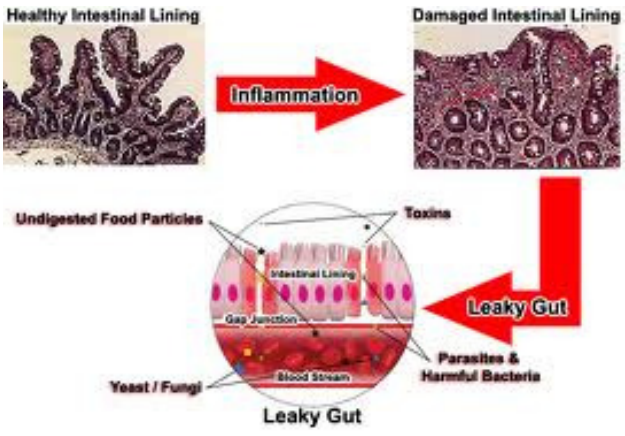
- ~ Hummus with carrots and celery
- ~ A handful of raw, unsalted almonds and walnuts
- ~ Whole fruit with almond butter
- ~ Rice crackers with hummus or almond butter
- ~ Plain yogurt with mixed berries and walnut pieces
- ~ Plain rice cakes with hummus and avocado spread. ♥

You are what you eat? Only if you can absorb what you eat!

By Dr Jonathan Bablad ND

Do you experience cracks around your mouth; or ridges on your nails; or white spots under your fingernails? If yes, your body is prompting you that you may have certain nutritional deficiencies. These deficiencies can occur because you may not be getting enough nutrients from your diet, or because your body has an increased demand for those nutrients (i.e. during pregnancy, post trauma/ post surgery, increased stress etc.) or because the integrity of your intestinal tract is not intact and not absorbing those nutrients. The latter is a common cause that I see in my practice.

One of the functions of your small intestine is to absorb nutrients. If there is inflammation in the intestine, or increased microbial imbalance (which is called dysbiosis) than absorption is compromised. Inflammation does not allow the microvilli (absorptive cells) to absorb nutrients efficiently, and if you have dysbiosis those critters are competing with your intestines ability to absorb those nutrients. My philosophy as a Naturopathic Doctor, is to remove the stressors on your body and support its weakest organ systems so that your body can use its innate intelligence to heal itself. Instead of supplementing based on symptoms, we need to address the cause behind what is creating these nutritional imbalances.



Nutritional deficiencies are even more common amongst people who are taking pharmaceuticals as certain prescriptive medications (i.e. birth control pill, anti-depressants, cholesterol medications etc.) have biochemical interactions with pathways in the body and deplete selective nutrients from those pathways. So essentially we can only be what we eat if we have optimal absorption. With that in mind it is important to assess your intestinal integrity to ensure that you are in fact absorbing nutrients properly (this can be assessed by a Naturopathic Doctor) and then, if necessary, supplement to optimize any nutritional deficiencies. ♥

Recipes– holiday goodness

Hayley Stobbs RHN of NOURISH consulting has created and compiled some delicious and healthy recipes to share with us for the holiday season. We encourage you to experiment with some of these healthy options and take a new dish to this year's Christmas potluck or family gathering. Enjoy! ♥

Before the party….

Macadamia Mix

2 cups macadamia nuts
1 cup dried cherries
1 cup dark chocolate chunks

Mix and store refrigerated in an airtight container. ♥

Party Punch

8 cups 100% pure juice blend (ex; apple with cranberry or black cherry)
4 cups sparkling mineral water,
Perrier or San Pellegrino
4 cups frozen fruit,
Cranberries, blueberries, strawberries.

Pour into a punch bowl and lightly mix ♥

Side dishes

Plant Gravy

2 cups *Imagine* vegetable broth
1 teaspoon *Bragg* soy seasoning
1 teaspoon each onion and garlic powder
¼ teaspoon sea salt, or to taste
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
2 tablespoons arrowroot powder,
whisked with ¼ cup cold water

Bring broth to a boil in a small saucepan with the herbs, sea salt, and black pepper. Whisk in the arrowroot powder and continue to whisk while reducing heat to medium low. Simmer, uncovered, for 5 – 10 minutes. Serve over millet mash, turkey, or steamed vegetables. ♥

Millet Mashed Potatoes

1 ½ cups cauliflower, chopped
½ cup millet
1 ½ cup water
1 - 2 tablespoons organic butter or virgin coconut oil
1 garlic clove, minced or pressed
¼ teaspoon salt

Bring water to a boil in a medium sized saucepan then add rinsed millet. Reduce heat to medium low and simmer, covered, for 10 minutes. Add cauliflower to pot, cover, and continue to cook for an additional 15 minutes. Add butter or oil when done cooking and mash with the remaining ingredients, with a potato masher, until soft. *Blending will result in a 'soup' like texture. Serve with plant gravy. *Variation:* Add 1 medium chopped carrot in replace of ½ cup cauliflower. ♥

Jewelled Mandarin Salad
with pomegranate dressing

1 teaspoon coconut oil
1 cup red cabbage, shredded
1/3 cup pumpkin seeds
1 teaspoon coconut oil
Dash of sea salt
1 cup mixed greens
1 cup mandarin orange segments
½ cup pomegranate seeds
1/2 cup dried sour cherries
1/3 cup goat cheese

Heat coconut oil in a medium sized fry pan and sauté
the red cabbage over low heat for 3 minutes. Transfer to a small bowl.

Add pumpkin seeds to a fry pan with melted oil over medium low heat and toast
until they puff, tossing frequently, about 5 minutes.

Serve cabbage and oranges over mixed greens. Top with cherries, pomegranate, pumpkin seeds, and goat cheese. Serve the **Pomegranate Dressing** (page 8) on the side.

Serves 3.♥

Pomegranate Dressing

1/4 cup pomegranate juice, fresh squeezed,
2 tablespoons pomegranate seeds
1/4 cup red onion, diced
1/4 cup olive oil
1/2 lime, grated zest
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon dried cilantro

1 tablespoon grated dark chocolate, optional
1/2 teaspoon each dried ginger and cumin
1/4 teaspoon cracked black pepper

Blend in food processor or blender until smooth. Yields about 1/2 cup.♥

Sweet Treats

Jiffy Bars

Cheers this season to a healthy twist on the traditional poppycock holiday treat! Naturally high in fibre and essential fatty acids, jiffy bars contain half as less sugar and butter than poppycock, while taking care to avoid refined ingredients such as white sugar and margarine which can lead to added holiday pounds, as well as decreased energy and immune functioning. Did I mention they taste great and are an easy to make?

Notes:
**Ingredients such as apple butter and brown rice syrup may be available at certain supermarkets, and will most certainly be available at your local health food stores such as Old Fashion Foods , Nature's Best Market, Body Fuel Organics, Or Eat Healthy Foods.*

**Arrowroot flour, an easy to digest starch derived from a western American plant, can be found at your local health food store.*

a
1/3 cup butter
1/3 cup apple butter
3/4 cup brown rice syrup
1 tablespoon ground flaxseed

b
8 cups popcorn
2 cups pecans
1 cup dried apple pieces, sulfite free, optional
1/3 cup pumpkin seeds
1/4 cup whole flax seeds
c
1/3 cup arrowroot flour
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoons sea salt
2 egg whites

Preheat oven to 350F. Line a muffin tin pan with 12 parchment paper baking cups.
In a medium sized saucepan melt butter over medium low heat. Add the remaining group 'a' ingredients and whisk until smooth over low heat.
Meanwhile, pop eight cups of popcorn into a large bowl. Toss with the pecans and apple pieces, and then combine group 'c' ingredients together in a separate small mixing bowl.
Drizzle the syrup mixture over popcorn and mix thoroughly with a wooden spoon, folding in the seeds and sprinkling in group 'c' ingredients in as you go.

Spoon into baking cups then bake at 350F for 20 - 25 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool. Refrigerate overnight to set or freeze and take out as desired.

Makes 12 cups. ♥

Hayley Stobbs RHN can be contacted via her facebook page:

NOURISH, Holistic Nutritional Consulting